

NEW HORIZONS

in the ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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by Carl R. Trueman

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New Horizons

in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church

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In Yuma, Arizona, the sunniest city on earth, members of Yuma OPC find some shade during a service in the park, risking "baptism" by the water sprinklers. (For more on Yuma OPC, see "An Oasis in the Desert" on page 10.)



A NEW SPROUT IN WACO



LAURA JANE KILGORE // In the bustling college town of Waco, Texas, there's a new sprout of God's kingdom. On any given Sunday morning, you can meander down into the foyer of Valor Academy in south Waco and there find the congregation of Trinity OPC.

It's a small crowd, but once you experience the warm greeting of the faithful members and see the way God has already been working here, it's easy to imagine how quickly it may grow.

The Need for an OP Church in Waco

In fall 2015, a group of families gathered in Waco. Many of them had been driving over an hour every Sunday to Pflugerville or the Fort Worth area for worship, in search of a church that faithfully preached from Scripture, encouraged spiritual growth, and reached out to the lost.

At this meeting, Mark Sumpter, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Southwest, presented to the families the basics of what it means to be a part of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The group knew they were seriously interested.

By early 2016, they presented a petition with a collection of about fifteen signatures to the presbytery in hopes that Waco would be approved as a mission work of the OPC. That March,

the petition was approved and work in Waco began in earnest. Trinity was soon established as a mission work under the oversight of Mid-Cities Presbyterian in Bedford, Texas, and its pastor, Joe Troutman.

Trinity found its first home in the lovely suburban community of Woodway, adjacent to the city of Waco. It started meeting weekly at Woodway Elementary School with preaching provided by Sumpter and other nearby pastors. By May 2017, Trinity was ready to receive an organizing pastor.

Meet the Kirklins

Jason Kirklin and his wife, Amanda, both grew up in the church. While Amanda professed her faith from an early age, Jason didn't come to a full understanding of the gospel until he neared the end of high school. They met at the local PCA, while working on their undergraduate degrees at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, and were married the

summer after Jason's graduation.

One of the first connections Jason Kirklin had with the OPC was through Danny Olinger, then the regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Ohio. Kirklin heard a lecture online by Olinger on the writings of Geerhardus Vos and wrote to ask him a few further questions about it. By the time the Kirklins reached Westminster Theolog-



Jason and Amanda Kirklin and their four children

ical Seminary in 2004, they were regularly attending an OP church.

After graduating from seminary in 2008, God led the Kirklins to Columbus, Ohio, where Jason got his law degree from Ohio State University in 2011. But even as he worked toward the degree, the Lord opened the door to ministry at Grace OPC in Columbus. He served as an intern there and was ordained as its associate pastor in November 2012.

While in Columbus, Kirklin preached for seven weeks at Grace Fellowship Church, an OP mission work in Huron, Ohio, while its pastor was in transition. He realized that he loved the outreach aspect of pastoring a small church and wanted to use his gifts in a more evangelistic capacity.

He started looking for similar permanent opportunities and learned about the church plant in Waco. In God's providence, when Kirklin made the call to learn more about Trinity, the pastor on the other end of the line—Joe Troutman—just happened to be an old friend from seminary.

In June 2017, the Kirklins relocated to Texas. Although Kirklin says climate didn't figure into his move to balmy Waco, he did admit that he would have been reluctant to relocate to a state any colder than Ohio.

The Kirklins may occasionally miss snow, and Waco is a long way from their roots in Indiana, but Texas living agrees with the whole family. Their four children, ages five to eleven, love their new school and playing with the congregation's other children after church.

Since his installation in August 2017, Pastor Kirklin has gradually added the regular programs of Sunday school and weekly prayer meetings, while still making time for outreach and evangelism to the city of Waco.

What's Going On in Waco?

Waco is active. On the first Friday of every



Handing out fliers at Baylor University's Church Fair (left to right), Laura Jane Kilgore, Jason Kirklin, and Joel Ilif

month, the entire city celebrates a night out, with special events in and around downtown. Couples on date night, groups of students, tourists enjoying the local attractions, and native Wacoans roam downtown for open-air movies, live music, and delicious food trucks. On these "First Fridays," Kirklin—borrowing the idea from Mark Sumpter and Miller Ansell in Houston—has started to do foam-board evangelism to engage people in conversation. (See "Houston: An Upward Call of God," *New Horizons*, October 2017.) If Waco is going out to do something, Kirklin reasons, Trinity wants to be out there doing its thing, too.

Waco is also home to Baylor University, a Christian university with more than seventeen thousand students. Kirklin fits right in. He has spent almost his entire life living in college towns and loves the energy that comes with them. There's an economic and

cultural stability and a never-ending stream of intellectual and evangelistic opportunities, he says.

The congregation of Trinity has many points of contact with Baylor, including both students and professors in attendance.

The undergraduate students at Baylor have been harder for Trinity to reach than the graduate population because they often have fewer transportation resources and tend to get plugged into some of the larger, more accessible churches right away. To respond to this need, Trinity offers interested undergraduates rides to church and hopes to soon have other welcoming events for them.

Although Pastor Kirklin immediately connected with the town and the congregation, Texas did offer him a surprise. He knew about the Bible Belt, but he still didn't expect to see so many churches and hear so many people identifying as churchgoers. Evangelism in a church-going culture must be relationship-based, Kirklin says. In this nominally Christian culture, you may freely discuss the gospel, but as soon as you pursue those relationships, you frequently



The church banner features a local landmark, the Waco Suspension Bridge

encounter unexpected roadblocks. People are often comfortable with their own spiritual state, and it can be a challenge to raise the question of whether they have saving faith. Trinity's goal remains simple: to seek conversations with Wacoans and to encourage true spiritual growth.

Preserving Life

In the past year, another challenge has risen. A brand-new Planned Parenthood facility opened in Waco in the spring of 2017, sparking local controversy. For several years previously, there had been no operating abortion clinics in Waco because of a failure to meet the requirement that clinics be within the prescribed distance of an emergency room. However, that requirement was overturned in 2016, and by April 2017, abortions were being done on select weekdays in Waco.

Trinity takes seriously the positive element of the sixth commandment "to preserve the life of ourselves and others" (Larger Catechism, Q&A 135). Kirklin and other individuals from Trinity are getting involved with a regional pro-life organization and with sidewalk counseling outside the abortion facility.

Kirklin will also soon begin training with CareNet to do some scheduled counseling with men at their facility. He, with Trinity, hopes to not only make provisions for the saving of these children, but also to minister to the men and women who are affected by the pain of abortion.

A New Home in Valor Academy

Woodway Elementary provided Trinity a home for over a year, but in the fall of 2017 it became clear that the church needed a more stable situation, preferably within Waco itself. A team of members began a diligent search and soon discovered Valor Academy, a classical Christian school that had a sanctuary-like auditorium available for Sunday use.

In making the move, Trinity cut back on set-up and tear-down commitments and improved their financial situation. After the purchase of chairs and a second-hand pulpit, Trinity moved into Valor the first Sunday in November 2017.

The whole congregation feels more at home at Valor, where they have the freedom to host monthly potlucks, after-church meetings, and special services without feeling like they're intruding. With Valor's better acoustics, the congregational singing lifts joyfully together as one raised voice rather than the notes dispersing into grade school cafeteria rafters. Trinity is thankful for a space that aids worship.

Best of all, Trinity is now officially in Waco, instead of being in the suburbs. Even before the official move to Valor, members of Trinity were going door-to-door in the nearby neighborhoods with Pastor Kirklin. Lord willing, the continued presence at Valor will encourage people to stop in on Sunday mornings and stay.

To fulfill the call to evangelism, Trinity wants to engage with the surrounding community. Kirklin says that if doctrine is the strength of the OPC, witness is often its weakness. Now with room in its meeting place for new at-

tendees, Trinity can confidently put down roots in the community surrounding Valor Academy. If the Lord chooses to keep them there for years, Valor can accommodate long-term growth.

Trinity's Growth Together

For something to be living, it must be growing—and for a church, this means not just a growth in number, but also in spiritual maturity. To that end, Kirklin has not only added weekly Sunday schools and Wednesday night prayer meetings, but also a Sunday afternoon reading group that focuses on evangelism, a new members class, and, soon, an officer-training class.

Kirklin also encourages every member to serve. According to the OPC Form of Government, "All believers are endued with the Spirit and called of Christ to join in the worship, edification, and witness of the church which grows as the body of Christ fitly framed and knit together" (FG 3.1). By so serving, not only can each person experience the blessing of being able to serve in the church, but no one will be overworked.

The current membership is about thirty people and regular attendance is holding steady, during Baylor's school year, at around fifty. While Trinity is on the road to particularization and the installation of elders and deacons, the exact timeframe is flexible.

When asked about his goals for Trinity Waco, Kirklin replied promptly: "Love and service to God, the church, and the world." Trinity may be a small congregation in a small city, but God can use them as he can use anyone.

In everything Trinity does, Kirklin says, it hopes to glorify God as a church, to live in accordance with the gospel, and to rely on the strength God provides in Christ by his Spirit. □

The author is a freelance writer and a member of Trinity OPC in Waco, Texas.



Prayer meeting at the Kirklin home

OUTWARDOPC.COM: A NEW TOOL FOR EVANGELISM



JUDITH M. DINSMORE // *Evangelizing is a learned skill. That's what John Shaw discovered back in 2006 when he moved to St. Paul, Minnesota, to plant a church. "My experience was similar to a lot of OP pastors and church planters," he said. "I had a desire to reach the lost, and a zeal for that work, but a lack of experience."*

So, on the ground, he began researching. "I started looking for tools, conferences, audio and video presentations, and examples of pastors who evangelized well."

At the same time, Brad Hertzog was serving as a church planter for the OPC in Queens, New York, and hunting for the same helps.

Hertzog and Shaw began exchanging resources and holding conversations about how to evangelize from a Reformed perspective. When Shaw became general secretary of Home Missions in 2013, those conversations continued and, in time, they merged with a daydream of Eric Watkins, yet another church planter, who was working in St. Augustine, Florida.

Watkins envisioned some type of online library with one bookshelf full of tracts, pamphlets, and materials that effectively and attractively communicated the

gospel. Church planters could browse, imitate, or download as needed. Another bookshelf might have information on building and maintaining church websites. A third would be loaded with resources on how to evangelize and how to preach with an eye toward the lost.

Home Missions took these ideas and formed a special committee to consider the creation of an OP website to house resources for evangelism and

outreach.

In August 2017, Outwardopc.com was launched.

A Website for Church Planters (And the Rest of Us)

As its name indicates, the website is about looking outward as a denomination. Shaw has two main goals for it: to encourage zeal in reaching the lost and to be a tool for making the OPC more effective in reaching the lost.

Built and maintained by Hertzog, now a digital communications professional, Outward OPC will contain articles, five-minute audio and video presentations on a variety of topics, in-depth presentations from pastors, and interviews with people who are successfully reaching out in a unique way.

This content falls under three main topics: tangible, practical, on-the-street outreach; church-planting vi-

Outward OPC

What is it?

A website with articles, audio and video presentations on a variety of topics, in-depth presentations from pastors, and interviews with people who are successfully reaching out in a unique way

Why was it created?

To encourage zeal in reaching the lost and to be a tool for making the OPC more effective in reaching the lost

Who is it for?

Church planters and anyone interested in outreach

Where is it?

Online at www.outwardopc.com

sion and strategy; and, inevitably, technology—not only keeping up with it, but also using it wisely, whether through church websites, social media, or other forms.

Many OP church planters are somewhat isolated and incredibly busy, Hertzog pointed out. Church planters do meet for training once a year in person and quarterly over the phone, but the time in between is usually a solo flight. Outward OPC can be a touchstone during those weeks with pithy, focused, and engaging content.

Not everything on Outward OPC originates inside the OPC. In fact, the site will archive content from a variety of other Christian sources. However, everything on the site has been carefully curated by Brad Hertzog and vetted by John Shaw and the associate general secretary for Home Missions, Al Tricarico.

“We’re a gateway for the readers,” Hertzog explained. “We are trying to bring good material from outside sources through the OPC grid so readers can learn from the ‘good’ without having to dissect every piece to find and discard the ‘bad.’ It should save them time and save them stress.”

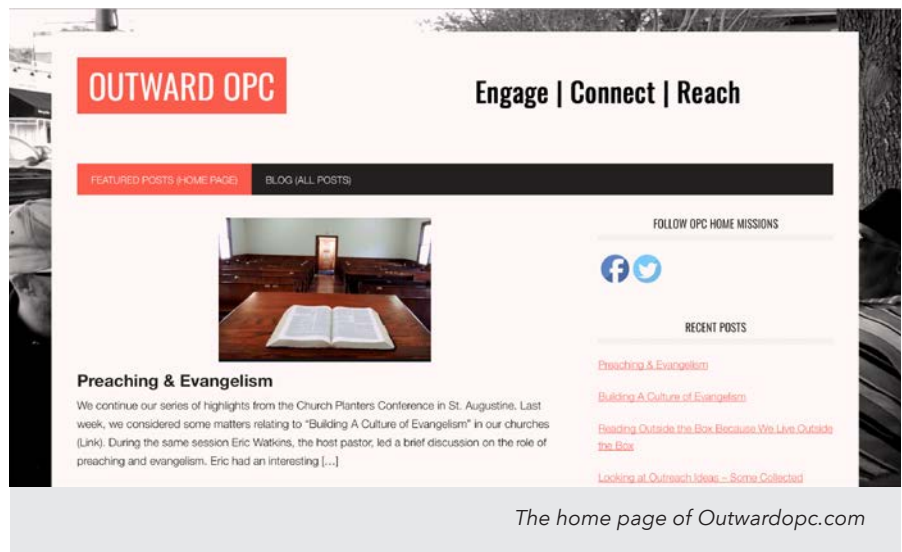
And the website isn’t just for church planters. Anyone in the OPC—officers, members, attendees—with a zeal for evangelism but a hesitancy on how to live it out, might gain insight from outwardopc.com.

The website was started because Home Missions wanted to make tools readily available to its church planters, but their hope, said Shaw, is that those tools are useful to the whole church as well.

“If you’re coming to Outward OPC, you’re coming to join a discussion about how the church can be better and more effective at reaching outsiders,” Hertzog said.

Looking Outward in the Postmodern Age

It’s a discussion that involves more cultural sensitivity than in previous decades of OP history. The learning curve



The home page of Outwardopc.com

of evangelism can feel like a steep slope up from worship on Sunday morning.

“The culture in which we live is becoming more and more disconnected from Christian faith and Christian living,” Shaw said. “We can’t assume a basic knowledge that, for the most part, we could assume even twenty years ago.”

In decades past, the church was seen as reputable and respectable. Not anymore, said Hertzog. “Now, we’re the outcasts. We’re a threat!”

The culture’s perception of the church shouldn’t change the gospel that we teach, Shaw said, but it should change *how* we teach it.



John Shaw teaching a class

“That really is a significant piece of why we’ve created this website,” he explained. “Our goal is to be intentional about how we understand and love our neighbors, and how we communicate the gospel to them.”

Hertzog cautioned that even though it may be a truism that the culture has changed, church budgets and decisions often don’t reflect it. Take a church planter’s website, for example. “The website is your front porch for outsiders. They’re going to go there first,” Hertzog said. Churches should do their best to greet and welcome guests when they show up on that “front porch.” And yet creating and maintaining the website can appear to be a dispensable line item.

Promotion Versus Evangelism

Pastor Eric Watkins agrees, although he’s no tech geek himself.

However, Watkins is careful to draw a distinction in the work of a church planter between *promotion* and *evangelism*. “Promotion is just making sure people in your community know you’re there,” he said. It can involve the church’s website and social media, or its signs, fliers, and cards. Evangelism, however, is “making the gospel particularly known to those who aren’t saved.”

The challenge of church planting in the twenty-first century is that promo-

[Continued on page 16]

HATE HAS NO HOME HERE



CARL R. TRUEMAN // On lawns in my neighborhood, quite a number of those “Hate has no home here” signs have appeared over the last twelve months. My immediate reaction is to see them as somewhat superfluous: I live in a Philadelphia suburb which, while hardly affluent, is nonetheless comfortable and safe, with a

community that is peaceful, friendly, and well-integrated. As far as I can tell, hate has not been much of a problem during the sixteen years I have lived here.

And yet these signs do capture something of the national mood—at least the mood of a certain section of the population—and are emblematic of political divisions which now seem deeper and more intractable than at any time since the late 1960s.

Critics might decry the signs as nothing more than “virtue signaling,” but even such a dismissive response raises the fascinating questions of what virtues are being signaled and why. All such actions rest upon values formed over time. They have a history, a genealogy. And understanding those can help us think more clearly about how we should respond.

The immediate context is obvious: the Trump presidency. These signs are a response to the unexpected victory of the populist Republican, entrepreneur, and reality TV star in the 2016 presidential election. But just as Trump is

not the cause of Trump but the result of other factors—a reaction to eight years of Obama, a symptom of a nation which has had sixteen years of controversial and increasingly partisan politics—so these signs are symptomatic of deeper, more significant shifts in how many people think.

Psychological Oppression

The most obvious factor is the psychologizing of the self. Put simply, we live in a world where identity is increasingly determined by who and what we think we are. Transgenderism is the most obvious example of this. If you have a male body but think you are a woman, then you are a woman, and no amount of pointing to the obvious physiological and chromosomal evidence will change your mind. Indeed, to cite such evidence will actually be regarded as oppressive, an act of hate.

Transgenderism may seem to some to be a very radical cultural development but it isn't really so. A moment's reflection indicates that for at least the

last four hundred years (and arguably much longer) the tendency to prioritize personal thoughts and feelings as the basis for identity has been gaining in strength. Descartes's principle, “I think therefore I am” stands on a continuum with “I think I am a woman, therefore I am.”

What has changed in recent years is not the basic psychological trajectory of how we think of personal identity but how it has meshed with the political culture in which we now find ourselves.

The notion of *oppression* was once understood in terms which were at root economic. In Britain, the trade union movement grew out of a desire to see more economic parity between classes. In America, nineteenth-century abolitionism and the civil rights movement of the mid-twentieth-century were driven by the desire to see African Americans enjoy the same opportunities for flourishing as others, a flourishing for which political freedom and equality before the law were basic foundations.

Now, however, we live in an era

where the worst oppression is considered to be psychological, that which hinders people from being who they really are—or at least who they think they really are.

The fusing of psychological identity and politics is long and interesting. In part, it has roots in the eighteenth-century emphasis upon sentiment as the basis for ethics, something found in thinkers as diverse as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Adam Smith. The role of Freud in sexualizing psychology is significant and helps explain why we now routinely talk in terms of sexual identity in a way which would have been incomprehensible in earlier times. And the refocusing of the political left on oppression as a psychological rather than an economic category, and of the political right on a libertarian view of human flourishing served to put expressive individualism and its most potent contemporary form, sexual identity, at the center of political discourse.

Of course, it is a little more complicated than that. All psychological identities are not equal. Having a deep, inner conviction that one is Napoleon Bonaparte or even a Donald Trump supporter is unlikely to garner the same social sympathy and status as a conviction that one is gay, transgender, or bisexual. Ever since Freud, sex has been touted as that which is fundamental to who we are, and with mass media promoting this idea through everything from soap operas to internet pornography, it now has the status of self-evident truth. Sex is no longer an activity. It is not

something you do. It is something you are. And to question this notion today renders one both an oppressor and an idiot, a lethal combination which allows one to be dismissed out of hand as an ignorant bigot.

The idea that we are fundamentally sexual was always bound to be a winner. Sex, after all, is fun and fun sells. With the full weight of Hollywood behind it, not to mention the advent of cheap and easy divorce, sex has long since ceased to be the seal of a lifelong monogamous relationship between one man and one woman and has become the recreational activity that defines who we are and what it means to be free.

Whose Loss?

And this brings us back to those “Hate has no home here” signs. One of the odd things is how middle class their location tends to be. They do not seem quite so prevalent in blue collar areas and those neighborhoods where the economically poor and disadvan-

taged live. That is because “hate” as defined by the sexual identity crowd is really of little consequence to those who still have the old-style oppression—poverty—to worry about.

This is where the question of “hate” becomes interesting. Indeed, we might say that the people living in the poorest parts of our cities are the victims of exactly the kind of “love”

which the affluent are promoting: promiscuous sex, untethered from the social responsibility which the family embodies and which Christian teaching promotes. Rates of single parenthood in poor areas are catastrophic. The sexual

revolution has wreaked havoc on the underclass while those who have promoted it—the Hollywood set, the suburbanites whose avatars populate John Updike’s novels—have the resources to realize their sexual philosophy in practice. It is those who emulate them from less privileged sectors of society who end up paying a very heavy price.

A Christian Response

So how should Christians respond to the “Hate has no home here” phenomenon?

Well, we should first of all affirm that we too hate hate. But we need to understand the underpinnings of this sloganeering. It is predicated on a notion of hate and oppression which is deeply psychological, subjective, and tied to the sexual revolution. With such, Christians can have nothing to do. Christians need to think about the overall cultural framework of which these signs are symptomatic.

Second, we need a robust Christian understanding of what it means to be a human being. It is not simply a matter of feelings. Nor is it something which is ultimately rooted in what the contemporary culture finds to be plausible or tasteful. It is that we are made in the image of God. And it is on that foundation that we build our views of every human activity and relationship—marriage, singleness, sex, children, etc. Struggles over sexuality in this present age are at root struggles over what it means to be a human being.

Finally, while Christians always need to avoid drawing attention to their own deeds of righteousness (particularly deeds which carry no more personal cost or sacrifice than the paltry price of a lawn sign), we do need to demonstrate what true love is in practice. That means being good neighbors in our communities. Tit-for-tat signage will not do the job. Only real care for real people in really practical ways will do that. □

The author is pastor of Cornerstone OPC in Ambler, Pennsylvania, and a visiting professor at Princeton University.



A neighborhood sign

AN OASIS IN THE DESERT: YUMA OPC

// JEREMY R. BAKER



Jeremy Baker with his wife, Gwen, and their three daughters, Daisy, Lily, and Dahlia

Most people I come into contact with have no idea where Yuma is or what it is like. Yuma is located in the southwest corner of Arizona, along the Colorado River. If you visualize a map of North America, Yuma is located where Arizona, California, and Mexico meet. There is rarely a cloudy day, and it is literally the sunniest place on earth. This climate is perfect for growing vegetables year-round, for attracting winter visitors, and for military training. In the winter, Yuma County grows over 90 percent of the nation's lettuce and doubles in population from around 100,000 to 200,000 residents. Yuma is also home to Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) and the US Army's Yuma Proving Grounds.

Yuma is also one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the country with several Christian churches. Prior to the Yuma OPC church plant, however, there was not one Bible-believing Reformed or Presbyterian church!

In September 2011, under the direction of OP Chaplain Tim Power, a small group of believers with a shared conviction of the Reformed faith, began meeting for Bible study. However, when Chaplain Power was reassigned and left Yuma, the group disbanded.

Then, in 2013, interest was rekindled with the arrival of an OPC family from Modesto, California, and the group began meeting again. In April 2015, Yuma OPC started holding worship services under the supervision of Rev. David Crum, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Southern California. About one year later, I, an Arizona native, moved with my family to Yuma as an intern. In May 2017, I was ordained.

The saints at Yuma OPC are thoroughly committed to reverent, biblical, Christ-centered worship that engages the hearts and minds of the people of God and inspires them to live grateful lives glorifying to his name. Our group is committed to reaching out to the unsaved throughout Yuma County, to the equipping of its members for the work of ministry, and

to the building up of the body of Christ.

Yuma OPC is diverse. We have folks from other NAPARC churches that have moved to Yuma, some from other broad evangelical churches, and some that have never before attended church on a regular basis; we have winter visitors, border patrol, and military families. We have retirees, singles, and young families (sometimes we are referred to as the church plant with all the kids!).

This group loves to gather not only for worship, but also for fellowship, and they are ready to serve each other. Our members are very involved in the community and are quick to invite friends, family, neighbors, and coworkers to church. Recently, we received two families into membership and heard two professions of faith. As soon as their class was over, we began another membership class with two more families. The Lord has blessed us with amazing people and continues to add to our number. We have about twenty families and are averaging fifty-five people for worship.

Yuma OPC is a wonderful and encouraging place to be. It is such a blessing to be involved in the planting of a new OP church. This congregation continues to be amazed to see how the Lord builds his church through the simple means of faithful preaching and the witness of loving fellowship.

We would ask that you pray for us as we get the word out to the community that we are here and that all are welcome. Please also pray that we would continue to grow in our love for God and in our love for each other!

The author is pastor of Yuma OPC in Yuma, AZ.

Home Missions Today

For up-to-date Home Missions news and prayer updates, e-mail HomeMissionsToday@opc.org. New editions: March 14, 28.

A VISIT TO THE PASTOR'S STUDY

William Shishko

Part of my “Not Your Traditional RHM” work is the production of a weekly radio broadcast called *A Visit to the Pastor's Study* (see *New Horizons*, January 2017). We are launching into year two of providing pictures of Reformed and Presbyterian church life—pictures for the ear—in the hopes of laying a foundation for church-planting initiatives.

In one sense, radio broadcasting is more of an act of faith than preaching in a building or even outdoors. In the latter, the preacher *sees* those to whom he is speaking. In the former, the preacher speaks only to a microphone with the *faith* that there are people listening.

Popular Programs

However, through statistics from the *A Visit to the Pastor's Study* (VTPS) page on sermonaudio.com, I can get a good idea of which programs have been of particular interest. Among these:

“The Transgender Revolution” (04/30/2017): In this interview with Jamie Dean, World News Group journalist, and Tim Geiger, Executive Director of Harvest USA, we discussed the fallout from those who have had sex-change operations and the best ways to minister to those struggling with issues related to sexual identity and sexual sin.

“Forming Young Disciples” (03/18/2017): Pastor Ben Miller gives an outstanding overview of the meaning of raising children in the context of the covenant of grace. I highly recommend this very practical program to those with young children and to those who are new to a Reformed understanding of the household in God's plan of redemption.

“End-of-Life Issues” (09/30/2017, episode 1; 11/25/2017, episode 2): These interviews, the first with two Christian medical doctors and the second with a Christian lawyer, develop both medical and legal aspects of the delicate and challenging issues connected with the use (or non-use) of extraordinary measures to prolong life.

“God's Ambassadors: A Revival of Preaching” (12/16/2017): In this interview with Dr. Chad Van Dixhoorn, the world's foremost authority on the Westminster Assembly, he explains the assembly's lesser-known work to bring about the reformation of preachers and preaching in Great Britain.

“A Celebration of Christmas: Handel's Messiah in Narration and Music” (12/23/2017): This is my personal favorite. Portions of Handel's famous oratorio are used to musically illustrate the narration—which presents the gospel and calls people to faith in Christ the King-Savior. It is an ideal tool to use for evangelism, especially in the Christmas season.

The full archives of past programs are available at the website: www.visitthepastorsstudy.org.

How to Use VTPS for Local Outreach

The interview and call-in program is aired to the entire metropolitan New York City area. It is also aired as a recorded broadcast in the Modesto, California, locale on KGCE-LP, FM 107.9 (www.graceradio.net).

However, I don't want people to forget that VTPS is produced also as a tool for local outreach—not just for our presbytery, but for all Orthodox Presbyterian congregations and for other NAPARC churches, too. Check out the VTPS website for a full list of ways to use the broadcast in your local church; but—for a start—here are some suggestions:

(1) Listen to the program yourself, and tell others about it. Locally, listen at WLIE 540 AM; for live streaming, listen at www.redeemerbroadcasting.org. The program airs weekly on Saturdays from 12:00–12:55 p.m. (EST).

(2) Email me at visitpastorbill@gmail.com and request to receive weekly notices of the program. Ask your pastor to have that program information put in your church bulletin each week. You can also request our official VTPS refrigerator magnets with the call-in number. Ask for some extra magnets to give to others and to put on community bulletin boards for advertising. With the permission of your elders, make them available to your congregation. We need your help to promote the program!

(3) During the broadcast, call in with your questions at (631) 955-5400 or text them to (516) 367-0391. Keep those numbers handy and give them to others. I want *you* to be part of this program and its ministry!

(4) Pray that the Lord will continue to bless the planning, writing, and production of VTPS. In our media-saturated culture there is so much competition for ears. Pray that our sovereign Lord will, in his special ways, direct people to these broadcasts and direct them to faithful churches and equally faithful local pastoral ministries. Remember (as we always say on the program): *Everyone needs a pastor!*

The author is regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Connecticut and Southern New York.



Quick Links for VTPS

To listen live: www.redeemerbroadcasting.org/pages/listen_live.php
To call in: (631) 955-5400
To text questions: (516) 367-0391
For show archives:
www.visitthepastorsstudy.org

MISSIONARIES TO UGANDA: THE VAN ESSENDELFTS

// MARK C. VAN ESSENDELFT



Mark and Carla Van Essendelft with their children: (back row) Daniel (11), Josiah (13), Joshua (15), Keziah (1); (front row) Andrew (3), Judah and Micah (5-year-old twins), and Hannah (8)

Editor's note: Last year, Mark C. Van Essendelft was appointed to serve at the Nakaale Station of the OP Uganda Mission in South Karamoja, Uganda, as missionary facilities engineer. Mark, a deacon in the United Reformed Church of North America, will be responsible for construction projects, the maintenance of the buildings and vehicles at the station, and assisting with diaconal relief efforts in the community. Mark, his wife, Carla, and their eight children arrived in Uganda in February 2018.

I was born in Smithtown, New York, to Judy and Lawrence Van Essendelft. My mother came to the United States from Germany as an exchange student when she was fourteen. She was raised in a nominal Lutheran home. I remember her exemplifying a servant's heart, first of all for the Lord, then for her husband, family, church, and the local Christian school. My father was raised in a godly home and came to faith attending the Christian Reformed Church with his family. A boat builder and commercial fisherman, he was a hard worker and taught me a biblical work ethic.

My youth was spent in the context of family, church, and Christian school. Despite having all these benefits, I squandered these advantages by living for myself until around the age of twenty-two. It was through the radio ministry of Dr. Charles Stanley that I realized all my covenantal advantages meant nothing to a holy God who looks at the heart. I knew my heart was not right before a God who sees all. One of the passages that convicted me was James 1:22: "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves."

As I grew in grace, I prayed for a wife with whom I could share my life. It was just when I had resigned myself to being single, thinking she would never come, that I met Carla. I knew right away that she was a "keeper," the one I had been waiting for. Carla has been a real soulmate and has helped me on the road of sanctification.

The Lord has blessed us with eight beautiful children: Joshua, Josiah, Daniel, Hannah, Judah and Micah, Andrew, and Keziah. We have enjoyed the privilege and opportunity of homeschooling them, which gives us the freedom to serve in ways we would not have been able to otherwise and gives our children a solid foundation for life with Christ at the center. The home is our first and most important mission field. We pray that the Lord would bless this primary work, and that he would also bless our labors outside the home.

Through the years, I gained experienced in a variety of types of work. When I was young, I worked for my father on his fishing boats in the Atlantic Ocean. Later, I spent several years as a metal fabricator of ornamental stairs and rails. I also worked for a few years as a corrections officer, followed by some time in the telecommunications industry. For the last eleven years, I have been self-employed in the fields of landscaping and real estate.

Along the way, the Lord has given me many lessons in trust and knowledge of him. On April 7, 2014, we lost all our earthly possessions as the Lord sheltered our lives from a tornado. From this we learned that possessions are temporary and witnessed Proverbs 23:4-5: "Wealth ... sprouts wings, flying like an eagle toward heaven." We also experienced the breadth of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:12-26) and the witness of the church in the face of tragedy.

The Lord has also worked in us an outward focus for those in our community who are lost. Soon after my conversion, I began teaching middle school boys in the local church. Later, I started sharing the gospel at the local prison, where I have taught for the last ten years.

We have also been blessed to take several hurting souls into our home and have tried to show the love and compassion of Christ to them, even if at times it can be uncomfortable.

We look forward to serving both the Orthodox Presbyterian Uganda Mission and the people of Karamoja for the honor of the King of kings and the advancement of his king-

dom. We covet your prayers.

In particular, please pray that we would have the strength to carry out his work in a manner that is pleasing to him who loved us and laid down his life for us so that we could lay down our lives for others.

A TORNADO, TWINS, AND THE CALL TO MISSIONS

Carla Van Essendelft

My story began long before I was born. God's eternal love wrote it before time began, and it is being revealed to me day by day. Sometimes I don't understand what God is doing in my life, and sometimes I'm not paying attention, but my comfort and anchor come from the fact that I am his, and he will weave all things for my good and his glory!

One of the most precious things to me is the godly heritage I received from my parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents. Without their love for God, his Word, and his kingdom, I would not be who I am today.

Born in Alberta, Canada, to Calvin and Ellen Tuininga, I was named after my father's mother, who has always been a role model to me of a kind, serving, fun-loving woman of God. My dad has been the only minister I have ever had, serving in Christian Reformed and United Reformed churches in Canada and the United States. My mom is also my best friend, and I can't begin to list the ways her love and prayers have been a guide and encouragement to me.

From an early age, I was taught the Word of God, and I learned to trust in and obey the Lord, making a profession of faith when I was sixteen. I attended Christian schools and was homeschooled through twelfth grade, and I am very thankful for those opportunities!

My older brother is Eric Tuininga—also a missionary for the OP in Mbale, Uganda. I also have an older sister and a younger brother and sister. Some of the best memories I have from my childhood are our family vacations when we spent time with extended family and viewed any and every historical site with parents and siblings. Some of the worst memories are when we had to move to a new home, leaving friends and starting over with relationships.

Looking back, I can see how God was using even those times to stretch, grow, and prepare me for following him wherever he wants me to go.

When I was eighteen and just out of high school, my dad took a call to serve a church in North Carolina. It was there that I met Mark, and we were married a year and a half later. My two older siblings also married and moved away, starting families of their own. Our eight children are very close to their nineteen cousins.

In the last few years, there have been several hard seasons that God used to turn my heart away from myself and toward

him and his people.

When our first three boys were just one, three, and five years old, we were blessed with three more children whom we would not meet this side of heaven. These miscarriages were accompanied by a close presence of the Spirit as I sought peace from the pages of Scripture. We were blessed a year later with our first little girl.

Then, while pregnant with twins, I walked with Mark's mother through her struggle with brain cancer, which was another journey of pain and heartache, as well as a deep drawing of strength from God's Word and people. The twins were born two weeks after her death, kicking off a year I hardly remember (because of no sleep). Judah and Micah have brought such joy and delight to our home, a thousand times more joy than the challenges that come with caring for twin babies! We would recommend twins to anyone.

Two years later, when I was nine months pregnant with our seventh child, we were struck by a tornado that destroyed our home, wrecked our property, and went on to hit my parents' home as well. God in his grace spared our lives, and taught us to let go of earthly possessions and find our strength and joy in him (Psalm 46). We look back now and thank God for this whole experience, which knit our hearts with his people from far and near who sent us relief and prayed for us.

Two days after the tornado hit, when Mark and I were talking about what to do for housing, I said, "Maybe we should walk away from everything and move overseas and do missions!" Those words were a turning point for me, and although Mark decided that we needed to rebuild (for which I am thankful!), he knew that my heart was ready to go if that was God's will.

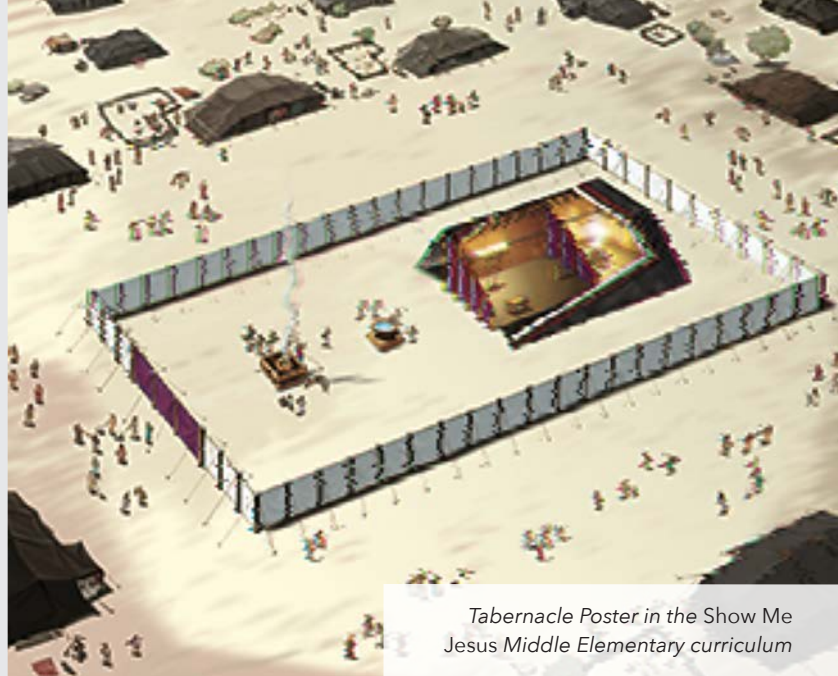
In the fall of 2016, we were challenged to think seriously about serving in Uganda. We prayed about it, sought counsel from loved ones, submitted applications, and visited the field in April 2017. Our hearts went out to the Karimojong people as well as to the missionaries working there, and we realized that we were willing and ready to serve God by serving them. We were approved as candidates by the Committee on Foreign Missions later that spring, and by mid-summer we made the decision to step ahead in faith, knowing that God would bless his plans for us.

The last seven months have been very busy for us as we have made preparations to go to the mission field. We are thankful that we have the love and support of our families and our congregation, and that Mark's brother plans to move his family into our home while we are overseas.

We would appreciate your prayers for the following: the transfer of our business to Mark's brother; health and strength while entering a different country and climate; building strong relationships with our teammates; transitioning well into a different culture; learning a new language; staying near to God in this stage of chaos; being in tune with our kids as they walk this journey beside us; and being a faithful witness of God's grace wherever we are.

LAYING A FIRM FOUNDATION FOR GRADES 3 & 4

// MARK LOWREY



Tabernacle Poster in the *Show Me Jesus* Middle Elementary curriculum

Do you remember being eight or nine years old? You were starting to feel more independent. You were reading, understanding, and discussing with others on your own. It's an exciting time of life and also a critical one—a time when a child's spiritual development and understanding of his or her faith is maturing. By third and fourth grade, not only have covenant children grasped much biblical vocabulary and many Bible stories, they have also absorbed more theology than most of us would realize about God, Christ, man, sin, faith, and more.

At the same time, they are experiencing the church at work: worship, sacraments, and the fellowship of a caring community of believers reaching out to others and the world. They are processing what they have been taught and observed. They are coming to understand more about Christianity and hopefully taking the faith as their own.

Unlike younger children who think only literally, middle elementary kids are growing in their ability to reason and discover, discuss ideas, compare and contrast, and analyze. So it's essential that curriculum for this age group is designed to help them discover important biblical truths as they grow.

Show Me Jesus for Middle Elementary

What critical truths does *Show Me Jesus* from Great Commission Publications teach to students this age? It teaches them: what it means to worship God; how they are to live before God: the Ten Commandments; what and who a Christian is; how their faith and the gospel relates to the world they live in, and how they can tell others about Christ; and God's greatness, his goodness, and how to trust in him.

The students are also introduced to thirteen people in the Old and New Testaments they probably have never heard of before. (This helps them realize there's a lot more in the Bible that they haven't yet learned—and have yet to discover!) And for every lesson of this two-year curriculum, there is *Daily Soul Food* that encourages students to read and study the Bible regularly and to pray on their own. They are encouraged to feed on God's Word and discover a deepening treasure that will last a lifetime.

Discovering Worship and God's Grace in the Law

Participating in worship is a regular part of a covenant child's life at this point. But does he or she understand the



First Catechism for your phone, tablet, and laptop

Are you teaching your kids *First Catechism*? **First Catechism To Go** is an interactive PDF you can put on any device (phone, tablet, laptop) and review the 150 Q/A with your children anytime, anywhere!

Both parents and kids can use **First Catechism To Go** to memorize deep biblical truths by tapping and

advancing each digital flashcard. There are also other fun features like drawing and searching. If your child is having trouble remembering a word or phrase, you can highlight or even block out a section to help with memorization.

First Catechism is an introduction to the Shorter Catechism for children ages two to ten. It covers essential biblical truths about God, sin, grace, faith, Christ, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and more. Visit www.gcp.org to watch the video, try out a sample, or download for only \$2.99.

Watch for a similar product for the Shorter Catechism by June.



what and why of the various elements of the worship service? Two quarters of Middle Elementary (thirteen lessons each) address this critical area of spiritual development.

“Worshiping God” is a hands-on discovery of eight elements of worship: praying (focusing on the Lord’s Prayer), singing God’s praises, listening to God’s Word, giving, confessing our faith, being baptized, participating in the Lord’s Supper, and receiving God’s blessing through the benediction. Through this study, students not only understand each element but how it fits into the worship services they participate in regularly.

In “God’s Design for Worship,” God’s regulations and practices for worship are taught in an entirely different way. Building on the Old Testament stories they have learned, students take a deep dive into discovering more about the tabernacle, priests, sacrifices, festivals, and holy days. This unique quarter is might be the only published study on Leviticus for children. And through this, they see how the visuals God provided for worship pointed forward to the ultimate sacrifice of Christ Jesus.

God tells us not only how to worship him but also how to live before him. How can children this age deepen their understanding of the Ten Commandments? Through a very practical look at both what is required and forbidden in each of the commandments. Students are introduced to the Shorter Catechism, which shows them that the commandments have more substance than they ever realized!

Living Out Their Faith

By now, many students are learning that not everyone believes the same as Christians do. Two quarters in Middle Elementary help them better understand the church and the gospel, as well as the importance of telling others about the good news of Christ. In “Telling Others,” they go on an exciting journey through book of Acts and grasp the “what” of missions. Then, in “God’s Growing Church,” they look “under” the stories in Acts to find out what God has been doing in the spread of his earthly kingdom and what this means for his people, the church.

In “Trusting God,” students grow in their understanding and awareness of trusting in God’s provision. They see that God cares for his people and gain a greater understanding of God’s saving power. God, their Maker and Provider, is also their Savior. In “Listening to Jesus,” they learn from their Teacher, Jesus, as he teaches about himself, their Father, and his children.

For a deeper understanding of the Bible truths and lesson aims of this curriculum, visit www.gcp.org. Under the Bible Curriculum tab, click on Middle Elementary. Then click “download complete master plan” on the scope and sequence chart for an overview of the thirteen lessons for all eight quarters.

Mark Lowrey is director of publications for GCP.

OUR MEMBERSHIP VOWS

Two Natures, One Person, Forever

Glen J. Clary

The Virgin Mary’s conception of Christ was a divine miracle. Christ was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in her womb. But even though the conception was not produced by natural means, it was, nevertheless, an actual conception, and Mary was truly the mother of Jesus. Our Lord Jesus Christ derived his human nature from the Virgin Mary.

As we noted previously, Christ is fully and completely God and fully and completely human. As God, he is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable. But his human nature was finite and subject to change. Jesus had to learn how to crawl and walk, how to read and write. His human body grew and developed just like ours. And his human mind had to learn and process new information; he grew in his understanding of the world.

At the same time, however, Jesus was fully God, and his divine nature was not subject to any limitations at all. As God, he is omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent. Christ is both God and man. And as the God-man, he is both infinite and finite. His divine nature is infinite, and his human nature is finite.

What does this mean in terms of where Christ is presently dwelling? Where is Christ now? He is seated at the right hand of God the Father. When Jesus ascended into heaven, he actually departed from the earth, and he is presently in heaven. But his divine nature cannot be confined to one place; it was and is and always will be omnipresent. Moreover, his divine nature cannot be contained by his human nature. The finite cannot contain the infinite.

It is necessary to distinguish the divine and human natures of Christ, but we also need to know that his two natures cannot be divided. From the moment of his miraculous conception in Mary’s womb, the two natures of Christ have been inseparably united in one undivided and indivisible person. And that union of the two natures in one person will remain forever.

☆ Congratulations

The **Shorter Catechism** has been recited by:

- **Anthony Lort**, *Emmanuel OPC, Wilmington, DE*
- **John Morrison**, *Grace and Peace Presbyterian Church, California, MD*

tion and evangelism must work in tandem. No one knows about the church if it only just started. And chances are they don't know the gospel, either. "Both have to happen well, especially at the beginning. It's kind of like being a farmer and asking whether the seed needs good dirt or water. It needs both," Watkins said.

Outward OPC hopes to be a resource for both promotion and evangelism, and to widen the gaze of the denomination outward, to outsiders. Watkins explained that just such an emphasis on evangelism was a hallmark of the nascent OPC, as seen in J. Gresham Machen's writings or Cornelius Van Til's sermons.

The intervening decades saw an influx of groups coming from other denominations into the OPC. "We did a lot of church planting just by answering the phone, not necessarily by evangelizing the lost," Watkins said. Responding to and incorporating these groups required the greater part of the OPC's energy, even while a commitment to evangelism persisted.

Now, that commitment needs hands and feet. "I think we all intellectually want to reach the lost, but I don't know that our passion always matches our intellectual commitment," John Shaw explained. "And I also don't think that our gifting and experience always match our desire."

Brad Hertzog's Urban Experience

Outward OPC is just one way Shaw is working to equip the OPC with the know-how and experience to match its desire for evangelism. Another is the church-planting internship that was started last year. And a third is collaboration with Hertzog beyond the website.

With the aid of Home Missions, Hertzog has worked with churches to produce videos that tell their unique story. (See "Visually Engaging the Lost

in Your Town," OPC.org feature, February 1, 2016.) Hertzog has also been commissioned by some presbyteries to scout nearby urban areas and sketch a picture of what it would look like to



Los Angeles is one of the cities Brad Hertzog has explored on behalf of an OPC presbytery

plant a church there. Most recently, he traveled to Los Angeles.

To draw up the assessment, Hertzog dives into the city—living in its neighborhoods and walking its streets. He takes his work into coffee shops, pays attention to what people are reading, and engages in conversations. He also assesses church climate, taking the "temperature" by visiting local churches, lunching with pastors, and asking local residents if they'd be willing to share what they think about Christianity and about church.

Then, he asks, "If I were the church planter, where would I start?" The answer for the Los Angeles locale was contained in a forty-page report for the Presbytery of Southern California on everything from possible facilities for worship to a description of the local culture to a suggested pastor's salary. Hertzog has done similar work in Houston and Washington, DC, with more possibilities in the pipeline for 2018.

The OPC's Strengths

In his work, Hertzog has identified several strengths of the OPC that, if communicated well, could be appealing

to outsiders.

First, as a church, the OPC knows who it is. And, it isn't prone to fads. "That is a huge asset to the outsider," he said. "People really need stability. The OPC has that."

Second, the OPC is well-equipped to receive families and help them to adjust to a new world of church life. If six days out of the week are spent shuttling kids to separate activities and even separate schools, having one day where the whole family visits a church that welcomes each child is a relief to the parents.

The third strength connects to claims in the last few years that suggest that millennials are leaving megachurches in droves in search of heritage, substance, and meaning. (See, for example, "Designing

Worship Spaces with Millennials in Mind," November 5, 2014, Barna.com.) Many of them are drawn to liturgical churches. But they could also be drawn to churches that are seriously and faithfully living out the Scriptures, including the OPC. "The OPC is all about substance," Hertzog said. "It has that in spades!"

Reaching the Lost

When Watkins looks at the church planters in the OPC doing their work, he sees them as heirs to the evangelistic zeal of men like Machen and Van Til. And he is optimistic.

"I think our best chapters are still being written," he said.

"My prayer," said Shaw, "is that ten or fifteen years from now, when people think about the OPC, one of the first things they'll think is: *this is a church that's really concerned about reaching the lost.*"

Readers can visit the site at www.outwardopc.com and sign up for email notifications of new content. □

The author is managing editor of New Horizons.

MARCH

1. **Mark and Carla Van Essendelft**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for Mark as he oversees maintenance projects at the Karamoja Mission Station. / **John and Wenny Ro**, Chicago, IL (downtown). Pray for Gospel Life Presbyterian Church to catch the vision for discipling others. / Pray for **David Haney**, director of finance and planned giving for the Committee on Coordination.
2. **Jay and Andrea Bennett**, Neon, KY. Join Neon Reformed Presbyterian Church in praying for its organization as a local church by 2020. / Pray for missionary associate **Leah Hopp**, Nakaale, Uganda, as she trains new community health assistants.
3. **David and Rashel Robbins**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for continued progress in reaching local tribal elders with the gospel. / Pray for **Lacy and Debbie Andrews**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Southeast, as he gives counsel to organizing pastors. / Army reserve chaplain **Paul (and Mary) Berghaus**.
4. **Jeremy and Gwen Baker**, Yuma, AZ. Pray for increasing evangelism opportunities for Yuma OPC. / **Flip and Anneloes Baardman**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for Dr. Baardman as he assumes leadership responsibilities at Akisyon a Yesu Presbyterian Clinic. / *New Horizons* editorial assistant **Pat Clawson**.
5. Missionary associates **Schylie La Belle** and **Angela Voskuil**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray that the Lord would work in the hearts of the children they teach. / Pray for Home Missions associate general secretary **Al Tricari-co**. / Pray for stated clerk **Ross Graham** as registrations arrive and preparations are made for the 2018 General Assembly that will begin June 11.
6. **Jim and Bonnie Hoekstra**, Andover, MN. Ask the Lord to add people to Immanuel OPC's mid-week Bible study. / **David and Sunshine Okken**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray that the people of Nakasien will respond to the preaching of the Word at worship services that recently began there. / Pray for **Andrew Moody**, OPC.org website technical assistant.
7. Missionary associates **Christopher and Chloe Verdick**, Nakaale, Uganda. Pray for Chloe as she serves the mission as its treasurer. / **Jason and Amanda Kirklin**, Waco, TX. Pray that Trinity OPC would be bold in outreach and evangelism. / Pray for the final production details before printing the new *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*.
8. **Josh and Kristen McKamy**, Chambersburg, PA. Pray that those in Covenant OPC's new members' class will complete it and join the church. / **Eric and Dianna Tuininga**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray for the care and development of local churches. / Pray for *New Horizons* managing editor **Judith Dinsmore**.
9. **Ben and Melanie Westerveld**, Quebec, Canada. Pray for Ben as he seeks avenues, including Bible studies, to reach those outside the church. / **Chris (and Nancy) Walmer**, area home missions coordinator, Presbytery of Central Pennsylvania. / *New Horizons* editorial assistant **Diane Olinger**.
10. **David and Rebekah Graves**, Coeur d'Alene, ID. Pray that the Lord would add new members to Coeur d'Alene Reformed Church. / Pray for missionary associates **Sarah Jantzen** and **Paige Vanderwey**, Mbale, Uganda, as they assist our missionaries. / **Jan Gregson**, assistant to the finance director.
11. **Charles and Connie Jackson**, Mbale, Uganda. Pray for Charles as he works with pastors, bringing them to a clear understanding of the Reformed faith. / Pray for **David and Jane Crum**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Southern California. / Army reserve chaplain **Stephen (and Lindsey) Roberts**.
12. **Chris and Megan Hartshorn**, Anaheim Hills, CA. Pray for more conversions and adult baptisms at Anaheim Hills Presbyterian Church. / Pray for missionary associate **Janine Eygenraam**, Quebec, Canada, as she assists with planning for this summer's English camps. / **Doug Watson**, part-time staff accountant.
13. Foreign Missions office staff, **Tin Ling Lee**, **Linda Posthuma**, and **Katrina Zartman**. Pray for Ling as she prepares for administrative responsibilities upon Linda's retirement. / **Miller (and Stephanie) Ansell**, church-planting intern, Houston, TX. / **Andrew Farr**, yearlong intern at Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Ada, MI.
14. **Bill and Sessie Welzien**, Key West, FL. Continue to pray that the Lord would add to Keys Presbyterian Church. / Pray for Foreign Missions associate general secretary **Douglas Clawson**, in Colombia this week to assist with the training of church leaders. / **Charlene Tipton**, database administrator.
15. Affiliated missionaries **Jerry and Marilyn Farnik**, Prague, Czech Republic, are thankful for increased attendance at the church in Modřany. / **Lowell and Mae Ivey**, Virginia Beach, VA. Pray for Reformation Presbyterian Church's Men's Leadership Class. / *Ordained Servant* editor **Greg Reynolds**.



Charles and Connie Jackson, with son Noah

16. Matthew and Lois Cotta, Pasadena, CA. Give thanks to the Lord with the saints of Pasadena Presbyterian Church for their new meeting place. / Pray that missionary associate **Kathleen Winslow**, Prague, Czech Republic, will be an encouragement to her students. / **Daniel (and Victoria) Garcia**, yearlong intern at Escondido OPC in Escondido, CA.

17. Pray for retired missionaries **Betty Andrews, Cal and Edie Cummings, Greet Rietkerk**, and **Young and Mary Lou Son**. / **Jim and Eve Cassidy**, Austin, TX. Pray for unity and fellowship among the people of South Austin Presbyterian Church. / Pray for **Mark Lowrey**, director of publications at Great Commission Publications.

18. Pray for Home Missions general secretary **John Shaw**. / **Ray and Michele Call**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray for the Lord's protection from illness for the children of our missionaries. / Pray for the **Subcommittee on Ministerial Training** as they meet tomorrow to approve pastoral interns and mentoring churches for 2018-19.

19. Mark and Jeni Richline, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray that new church members will continue to grow in their walk with God. / Pray for **Jim (and Judy) Bosgraf**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of the Midwest. Pray for protection as Judy faces an advanced form of cancer. / Pray for CCE general secretary **Danny Olinger** as he meets with the Committee on Christian Education this week.



Jim and Judy Bosgraf

20. Bradney and Eileen Lopez, Arroyo, Puerto Rico. Pray for Iglesia Uno Reformada, that God would save local families and bring them to worship. / Missionary associates **Markus and Sharon Jeromin**, Montevideo, Uruguay. Pray for a bold witness as they interact with unbelieving contacts. / *New Horizons* proofreader **Jessica Johnson**.

21. Pray for affiliated missionaries **Craig and Ree Coulbourne** and **Linda Karner** (on furlough), Japan. / **Bob and Grace Holda**, Oshkosh, WI. May God's Word at Resurrection Presbyterian Church produce deepening faith, fresh repentance, and evangelistic zeal. / Diaconal response coordinator **David Nakhla**. Pray for David and for the Committee for Diaconal Ministries in its deliberations over the next two days.

22. Pray for **Bill (and Margaret) Shishko**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Connecticut and Southern New York. / **Ben and Heather Hopp**, Haiti. Pray for meetings being held with local church leaders to begin organizing Haiti's first presbytery. / **Janet Birkmann**, Diaconal Ministries administrative assistant.

23. Associate missionaries **Octavius and Marie Delfils**, Haiti. Pray for decisions being made as presbytery organizational meetings continue today. / Pray for organizing pastor **Chris Cashen**, as he and his wife, **Grace Ann**, begin their labors at the new mission work in Clarkston, GA. / **Mark Stumpff**, Loan Fund administrator.

24. Andrew and Billie Moody, San Antonio, TX. Pray for growth for San Antonio Reformed Church as they study how to be a good neighbor. / Pray for Foreign Missions general secretary **Mark Bube**, speaking at a missions conference in Raleigh, NC, this weekend. / **Andrew (and Cyndi) Myers**, yearlong intern at Trinity OPC in Hatboro, PA.

25. Pray for tentmaker missionary **T. D.**, Asia, as she helps to organize a homeschool co-op for foreign students entering junior high. / **Ryan (and Rachel) Heaton**, church-planting intern, Naples, FL. / *New Horizons* cover designer **Chris Tobias**.

26. Larry and Kalynn Oldaker, Huron, OH. Pray that God would work in the hearts of the hundreds of contacts made by Grace Fellowship OPC in 2017. / Pray for **Mr. and Mrs. J. M.**, Asia. Pray for Mr. J. M. as he begins language classes. / **Aijalon and Jana Church**. Pray for Aijalon as he serves a yearlong internship at Covenant OPC in Sinking Spring, PA.

27. Mr. and Mrs. M. M., Asia. Pray for Mr. M. M. as he teaches at a local seminary. / Pray for **Dave (and Elizabeth) Holmlund**, regional home missionary for the Presbytery of Philadelphia, as Dave works with the pastoral search committee for the church plant in Downingtown, PA. / **Scott (and Elizabeth) Creel**, yearlong intern at Redemption OPC in Gainesville, FL.

28. Daniel and Amber Doleys, Springfield, OH. Pray for continued enthusiasm in the second year of Living Water OPC. / **Mr. and Mrs. F.**, Asia. Pray for Mr. F. as he provides leadership to the ministry team. / **Adam (and Joy) Harris**, yearlong intern at Covenant OPC in Komoka, Ontario, Canada.

29. Mr. and Mrs. K., Asia. Pray for Mr. K. as he continues advanced language studies. / **Matt and Elin Prather**, Corona, CA. Pray for opportunities for the Corona Presbyterian Church members to share the gospel with their neighbors. / **Kathy Bube**, Loan Fund document specialist.

30. Pray for Home Missions administrative assistant **Katie Stumpff**. / Missionary associates **E. K.** and **M. S.**, Asia. Pray for Bible studies that meet each week. / **Stephen (and Felicia) Lauer**, yearlong intern at Redeemer OPC in Beaver Creek, OH.

31. Heero and Anya Hacquebord, L'viv, Ukraine. Pray for maturing leaders in the church in L'viv. / **Eric and Donna Hausler**, Naples, FL. May the Lord give Christ the King Presbyterian Church wisdom in reaching families in their community. / Army reserve chaplain **Andrew (and Elizabeth) Barshinger**.

NEWS, VIEWS, & REVIEWS

IN MEMORIAM CARL J. REITSMA

Lendall Smith

Carl J. Reitsma, 90, entered into his eternal rest in the early hours of the Lord's Day on January 7, 2018.

A graduate of Calvin College, the Theological University of Kampen in The Netherlands, and Westminster Theological Seminary, Rev. Reitsma served several pastorates in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as well as The Reformed Church in Wellington, New Zealand, and Timothy Christian School, in Elmhurst, Illinois, as Bible instructor. His final charge was at Calvary Christian Reformed Church in Lowell, Michigan.

In retirement, Carl and his wife, Dorothy, were active members of Bethel Presbyterian Church in Wheaton.

"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord ...that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them" (Rev. 14:13).

IN MEMORIAM HAROLD C. DORMAN

Paul MacDonald

Harold C. Dorman, 100, accompanied his son Leonard's family to Pilgrim OPC,



Harold Dorman after his ordination in 1958



Carl and Dorothy Reitsma with their three children, Daniel, Mary, and Jeanne, circa 1955

Bangor, Maine, on December 24, 2017, for the baptism of his youngest great-grandchild, Edward Elias Dorman. Three days later, Harold died and entered in the new day of the church triumphant.

Born on July 4, 1917, in Hamden, Connecticut, Harold suffered spinal meningitis when he was five years old which permanently impaired his hearing. After serving in World War II, he studied for the gospel ministry at Calvin College and Westminster Theological Seminary. Tragically, on Harold's thirty-third birthday, lightning struck an outdoor Dorman family party in Hamden. A bolt entered Harold's hip and exited his toe. One of Harold's sisters, a brother, and the brother's fiancée, were killed on the spot.

In 1954, as a licentiate, Harold moved to Cornville, Maine, and served that vacant pulpit until his ordination as an OP minister in 1958. He continued his ministry for sixty consecutive years before stepping down in November 2014, at ninety-seven.

He leaves his wife of sixty-seven years, Marjorie (Van Der Weele),

his sons Gerald, Ronald, and Leonard, his daughter, Laurel Trundy, seventeen grandchildren, and seventeen great-grandchildren.

IN MEMORIAM ROBERT M. COIE

Robert Needham

Robert McCornack (Bob) Coie, 79, beloved husband of Martha Rushdoony Coie, called by God to join the church triumphant, died peacefully in his sleep in the early hours of January 17, 2018. He had been diagnosed with lung cancer in October 2017.

Bob was born March 29, 1938, the only child of Glenn and Gladys Coie. Since his father was one of the OPC founding pastors, Bob grew up knowing many first-generation OPC leaders; he was himself ordained a ruling elder in May 1972 and granted emeritus status in January 2017.

Bob loved the church of his Savior, serving superbly for years as secretary of the Committee on Chaplains and Military Personnel and also as moderator of the Seventieth Assembly (2003).

A former Marine, Bob loved to sup-

port church members serving in the military and for many years maintained a monthly prayer roster of church members serving in uniform.

Bob, who dearly loved his family, is survived by his wife, Martha, five children (Robin, Christine, Jennifer, Mary, and Glenn), and nine grandchildren.

UPDATE

MILESTONES

- Former OP pastor **Carl J. Reitsma, 90**, died on January 7.
- Elder **Robert M. Coie, 79**, died on January 17.

REVIEWS

***Learning from Lord Mackay: Life and Work in Two Kingdoms*, by J. Cameron Fraser. SoS-Books, 2017. Paperback, 128 pages, \$12.00. Reviewed by OP pastor Gregory E. Reynolds.**

This is an unusual book written by Cameron Fraser, once the editor of the *Presbyterian Guardian*. The book explores the sterling character of Lord Mackay and how he navigated the two kingdoms of his British context.

The subtitle of the book, “Life and Work in Two Kingdoms,” is of special interest to Orthodox Presbyterians, as Fraser notes in his preface (7). He begins with Melville’s famous humiliation of King James VI, when he reminded the king that he was merely a member of the Church of Scotland (11). Fraser traces the development of the two kingdom doctrine through Luther, Knox, and Calvin, concluding with the enshrinement of many of their ideas in various Reformed confessions (12–17).

While the structures of establishment exist in England, “pluralism and secular values ... hold sway. How is a Christian in the tradition of the Westminster Confession to conduct himself in such a context?” (20). Enter the story of Lord Mackay, one time Lord



Robert Coie

Chancellor of the British government, who outranks even the Prime Minister.

Mackay was raised in the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, in which his father was an elder (25). After graduating from Trinity College, Cambridge, he went on to practice law in Scotland. In 1979 Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher appointed him Lord Advocate of Scotland, “the chief legal officer of the government and crown in Scotland” (30–31). Then in 1987, Thatcher appointed him as Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain (34–35).

Fraser emphasizes the effect Mackay’s Christian character had on his legal associations. “Lord Mackay has become known in the legal profession, in political circles and the media as well as in the church, for his unassuming humility, personal loyalty, and gracious character” (58). This character was cultivated by faithful Lord’s Day observance (61).

In favoring no-fault divorce law, Mackay parted company with many Christians and conservatives. He believed that the acrimony created by the necessity of finding fault was damaging to the children and the couple (67, 105). His ideal was marriage between a male and a female for lifetime (106).

Fraser locates Mackay’s position on the two kingdoms in the contemporary context. Fraser quotes with approval from Tim Keller’s 2012 book *Center Church*, which provides a helpful summary of the weaknesses of both the

transformationalist and the two kingdom positions (84–89). One of Keller’s criticisms of the two kingdom position raises a good point that has always intrigued me. “Much of the social good that Two Kingdom people attribute to natural revelation is really the fruit of the introduction of Christian teaching—special revelation if you will—into world culture” (86). I doubt that many two kingdom advocates would disagree with the reality of this influence. I certainly don’t.

According to Fraser, Mackay

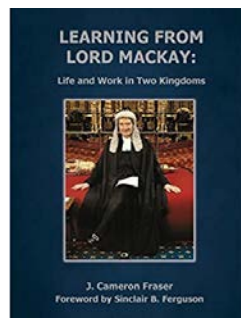
does not self-consciously operate on the basis of either model. But his concern for personal godliness coupled with his realistic view of what can be accomplished in a fallen political system seem to me to place him closer to the two kingdoms model. (93–94)

The discussion of the relationship between church and state will no doubt continue until the end of time. This book makes a nice contribution to the conversation. More importantly it provides an inspiring example of a Christian serving in church and state.

Work Songs, The Porter’s Gate Worship Project, 2017. Digital album, \$8.99, available at Amazon.com. Reviewed by OP pastor Jonathan Landry Cruse.

Work Songs, a brand-new album released by The Porter’s Gate Worship Project, is comprised of thirteen original songs that all focus on “affirming vocation as an integral part of a life of worship.” This is a unique collection of Christian music, to say the least, and for several reasons. For one, it was recorded entirely live, primarily over the course of a three-day session in a small church in New York City. This comes across in positive and powerful ways to the listener. Without excessive dubbing or other forms of manipulation, you can hear the artists truly collaborate on each track—it brings an authenticity, energy, and emotion to the music.

Work Songs also stands out as a collaborative project, boasting a wide-range of talented people from different backgrounds and skill sets. This includes composers like Stuart Townend, singers like Josh Garrels, and scholars like Dr. Christina Edmondson—dean of intercultural



student development at Calvin College, and wife of OPC pastor Mika Edmondson. (The OPC has no official relationship with the Porter's Gate Worship Project, and the group intentionally spans any denominational lines.)

Every song on the record focuses upon some aspect of Christian vocation. As it is a much-neglected theme in terms of Christian music, I was very pleased to see this subject taken up and handled with care and craft by The Porter's Gate Worship Project.

"Establish the Work of Our Hands" proclaims the truth that our labor is all in vain without the Lord's blessing and aid, and proves to be a soulful expression of both Psalms 90 and 127.

"We Labor unto Glory" hauntingly reminds us that no matter what station we take up in this life, we all do it for the singular purpose of glorifying God.

"Day by Day" seeks to validate the everyday, seemingly mundane positions we hold in this life (servant, teacher, farmer, etc.) and to teach us that when done unto the Lord these roles point others to his goodness, character, and promises: "Lawyer, give us hope that one day justice will surround us."

Musically, the album has a restrained, melancholic flavor, perhaps speaking to the temporary, penultimate, and oftentimes frustrating nature of work this side of heaven. That being said, the harmonies, playful piano, and infectious chorus of "Father, Let Your Kingdom Come"

(a highlight track) will certainly bring a smile to your face. They sing, "May the work of my hands bring you joy." Amen!

But overall, the album has a muted sound. The instrumentation does not expand much further than keys, strings, and acoustic guitar. There are clear influences from the Gospel, Spiritual, and Folk/Appalachian genres, and this, coupled with the bare-bones recording technique and vulnerable lyrics,

leads to what can only be referred to as an "honest" album.

It should be noted that while the record is promoted as featuring thirteen "modern hymns," the majority are not suitable for congregational singing. Some melodies span ranges that are too vast for the average singer, and others are too complex or unintuitive for a congregation to pick up in a unified manner. That being said, it is apt music for soloists and ensembles (as heard on the album).

Work Songs is well worth a listen. And not just one, but several. The rarely-tackled subject of the theology of Christian vocation is presented beautifully in these songs, and we would do well to reflect carefully upon it.

***The Vanishing American Adult: Our Coming of Age Crisis—and How to Rebuild a Culture of Self-Reliance*, by Ben Sasse. St. Martin's, 2017. Hardcover, 320 pages, \$14.76 (Amazon). Reviewed by OP minister Donald M. Poundstone.**

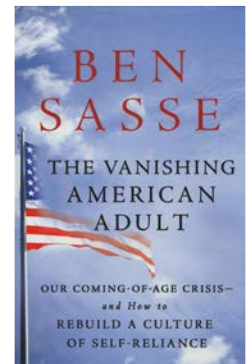
Senator Ben Sasse (R-NE), husband and father of three as well as a committed Reformed Christian, has written a wonderful book. While serving as a college president before his election to public office three years ago, Mr. Sasse discovered that many students remained immature youths well into their twenties and beyond. He conceived this book to address the widespread problem, in the words of the volume's subtitle, of *Our Coming-of-Age Crisis—and How to Rebuild a Culture of Self-Reliance*.

Along the way the senator treats such topics as the need to help our children resist peer pressure, learn the value and satisfaction of hard work, develop the habit of reading widely and critically, and get by with less stuff. The chapter on the benefits of travel and the discovery of unfamiliar places and cultures (as opposed to mere "tourism") is alone worth the price of the book. (But that's true of other chapters, too.)

Readers will quickly learn that Sasse doesn't blame either American young people or their parents—as least not exclusively—for the mess we're in. No, our current situation stems from a variety of widespread societal and cultural developments. Increasing national wealth and shifting attitudes toward child-rearing and the role of schooling contribute to an extended period of casual adolescence, including troublesome delays of marriage and moving out of Mom and Dad's home.

The book is filled with engaging accounts of the author's experiences while growing up as the son of a wrestling and football coach in a small Nebraska town, and the wisdom he and his wife, Melissa, have learned and practiced in the rearing of their own children. While the book is not a heavily religious or in-your-face Christian tract, the Sasses offer numerous specific and helpful suggestions for childhood reading and activities designed to produce independent, responsible, and mature young adults.

Senator Sasse doesn't employ a useful phrase (see the next sentence) and barely hints at a major source of resistance to his analysis and prescriptions. The ancient Romans used the phrase "bread and circuses." Members of the ruling class realized that assuring adequate food and entertainment (especially violent spectacles) was an effective way to keep common folk docile and content with their lot as subjects. Americans are in the process of perfecting this strategy. Many of our political, academic, and other leaders seem



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satisfied to guarantee that we all have plenty of cheap fast-food and drink, a smartphone, and endless supplies of popular entertainment as the surest road to maintaining public order and their own positions of power. The late social critic Neil Postman, occasionally referenced in Sasse's book, warned us over thirty years ago of this danger in his classic volume *Amusing Ourselves to Death*.

Sasse's book is highly recommended to the readers of *New Horizons*, especially to newlyweds and the parents of young children. You won't be disappointed!

***Created and Creating: A Biblical Theology of Culture*, by William Edgar. IVP Academic, 2016. Paperback, 272 pages, list price \$17.94 (Amazon). Reviewed by OP pastor Cliff L. Blair.**

In this volume, Dr. William Edgar advocates that "the Bible teaches that cultural engagement before the living God is, along with worship, the fundamental calling for the human race" (87). His book has three sections of roughly equal size.

In the introduction and first section, he examines the idea of culture from the etymology of the word to a survey of nineteenth- and twentieth-century cultural studies. It is abundantly apparent that Edgar has thought long and read broadly and deeply on his subject.



These will be the most challenging chapters for the non-scholar, but they are in no way impenetrable.

He surveys Christian views, looking at Niebuhr, Eliot, Lewis, Kuyper, Schilder, Schaeffer, and others. C.S. Lewis seems to present something of a conundrum. He spent his life engaging with culture as a professor, critic, and author, and yet he often seemed to gently disparage its significance. Edgar summarizes Lewis's perspective: "Culture is a storehouse of the best sub-Christian values, much as the soul is close to the spirit. Culture, then, may be preparation for grace, or even a road away from it, but it cannot be confused with grace" (62). He opines that Lewis "was rather too skeptical about the New Testament's apparent diminishing of culture" (63). One senses him willing Lewis to fit his mold.

In the latter two sections, Edgar engages with Scripture. The second section addresses passages that seem most problematic to a thesis of cultural transformation: those emphasizing the division of church and world, the kingdom of Christ and the kingdoms of men. He gives a second reading of these texts, seeking to show that they are not insuperable obstacles to his position.

The third section is a more positive case for cultural engagement. He begins in Genesis where God charges mankind to multiply and subdue the earth. He

reads here a cultural mandate to respond "to the divine call to enjoy and develop the world that God has generously given to his image-bearers" (176). He goes on to argue that the Fall has not removed this mandate. Indeed, redemption is not properly understood unless it has a cultural expression.

There is much to think on in this book, but the shadow of a false dichotomy hangs over it: we are pressed to choose between a simple evangelism that merely saves souls with no thought of culture (beyond a suspicious hostility) or making cultural transformation the mission of the church. A helpful alternative seems to go unconsidered: we carry out the church's unique mission of proclaiming the life-giving gospel, wholly alive to the truth that as people are transformed, culture must follow as an effect but not a goal. Or to quote Lewis's admonition from *Mere Christianity*: "If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next. ... Aim at Heaven and you will get earth 'thrown in': aim at earth and you will get neither."

***The Majesty on High: Introduction to the Kingdom of God in the New Testament*, by S. M. Baugh. Create Space, 2017. Paperback, 168 pages, \$12.95 (Amazon). Reviewed by OP pastor Jonathan Moersch.**

Reading the Gospels, one comes away with the clear impression that Jesus spoke

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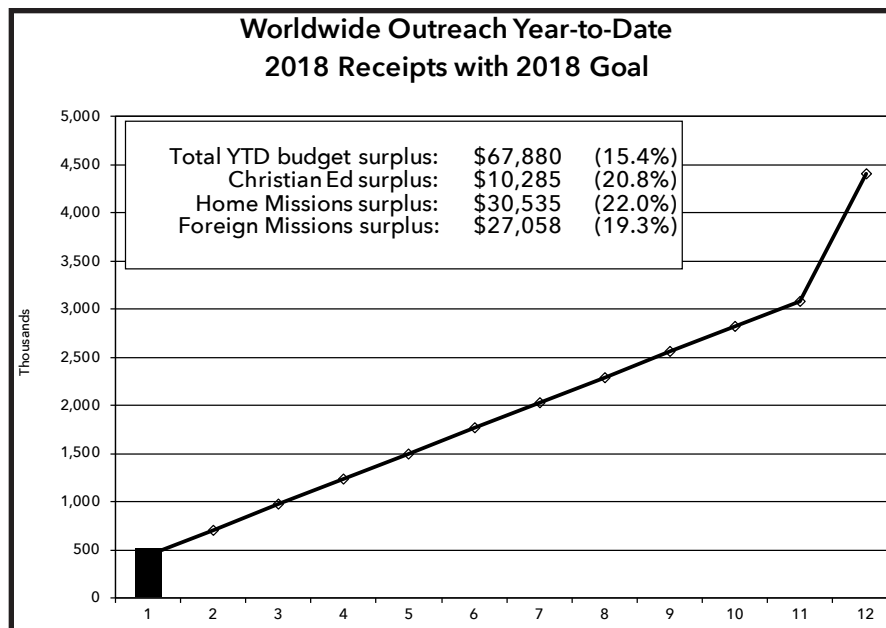
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at length concerning the kingdom of God (occurring over one hundred times). But what exactly is the kingdom? A topic of such magnitude is difficult to define in a succinct, yet comprehensive manner. After many years of study and reflection on the topic, Dr. Steven Baugh offers this very simple definition of the kingdom: it's the New Creation.

This definition of the kingdom helps to correct the misunderstanding that amillennialists “spiritualize” the nature of the kingdom, reducing it merely to the moral reign of God in the hearts of the elect. On the contrary, understanding the kingdom to be nothing less than the new heavens and new earth—which the New Testament repeatedly affirms is more lasting, permanent, and unshakable than things seen on earth (2 Cor. 4:18; Heb. 11:10, 12:28)—offers the most concrete, tangible kingdom imaginable. And yet the amazing news of the gospel is that this kingdom of God is at hand (Matt. 4:17)! As Baugh points out, Christ has truly inaugurated the kingdom of God at his first coming, but we await the full consummation of it at his second coming.

As the subtitle implies, this book is merely an introduction to the kingdom of God. While it does not address all aspects of the kingdom, it enables the reader to gain a solid foundation for future studies, such as the kingdom and the church, the kingdom in the world, and kingdom ethics.

In order to gain greater appreciation



for how exactly the kingdom of God has been already inaugurated and how it will be finally consummated in the future, Baugh considers the following elements of the kingdom: the King, his kingly dominion, the realm, the subjects of the realm, and covenant as kingdom constitution.

Each chapter of the book is a careful study of a biblical passage that demonstrates these elements. These passages include Revelation 4 and 5, John 3, 1 Corinthians 15, and Matthew 5. For chapters 7 and 8 of the book, Baugh brings out several passages that explore the connection between the kingdom and covenant, namely, that a covenant establishes or le-

gally constitutes a kingdom.

This book is written in a non-technical style, so one does not need to know Greek or theological jargon to benefit from it. That being said, it is not overly simplistic, and it does require careful reading. Although intended for the layperson, I suspect pastors and scholars alike will glean from these pages. Baugh brings his wealth of knowledge of Greek and of Greco-Roman culture to illumine the text of Scripture.

The Majesty on High is recommended for any who would like to gain a greater understanding of the kingdom of God and an appreciation for what it means to be a citizen of it.

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